THE CROSBY VOICE

NEWSLETTER OF THE VICTORIAN BING CROSBY SOCIETY
Registered by Australia Post - Publication No. VBH 2120
Issue No.19 November 1981

Hello again,
Seems like no time at all since our last newsletter, and here we are already with our final effort for 1981!

Having informed you of our change of address in the last newsletter, it's already time to tell you of our next and permanent (this time) change, due to take place towards the end of January next year. The Machliss family recently bid successfully at auction and so, from the above date will be addressed at 24 Alston Grove, East St Kilda. (That's 'Alston' as in 'Alston (Al) Rinker'. Who wants to live somewhere like 'Crosby Drive' or 'Crosby Square' like other members!)

If you haven't yet renewed your membership, then I'm afraid that this will be the last newsletter you will be receiving. We'll just have to assume that you don't wish to renew. If you are experiencing any kind of financial difficulties but would like to remain a member, please don't hesitate to write and we will happily defer or even waive your membership for the year. Naturally, any letters received will be treated with complete confidence.

Once again, we have amassed an interesting collection of material - thanks to the help of various members around the world.

From Japan comes news of an LP set featuring four tracks long sought after by collectors but unavailable on any disc for many years. See "New Record Issues". Page 13.

From England comes an interesting letter from Renee Chester on her recent visit to the unveiling of Bing's statue at Gonzaga University. You can read her letters and see the photographs she sent on pages 9 and 10.

From America come two rare postcards featuring Bing - supplied by new member Mark Scrimger. See those on page 14.

And from members all over came clippings telling of young Nathanial Crosby's success in winning the U.S. Amateur Golf Championship. Obviously we couldn't feature all these in the newsletter, but the best of the articles is reproduced on pages 5 and 6. If Nathanial continues

his progress, then the chances are good that we'll see him in Australia within a few years. As golfers in the membership will know, Australia attracts the top international players these days.

On a sad note, October 14th marked the fourth anniversary of Bing's passing. Four years already! On page 21 we feature an advertisement for Bing's 50th Anniversary TV special which was screened here by Channel 7 a few days after his death.

This issue of the Crosby Voice also features both the President's report and Treasurer's Report for the year just past. For all members, including those present at the A.G.M., this will be their first opportunity to know the contents of the President's Report. After carefully writing it, yours truly then managed to leave it at home on the night! Ah well, I don't think anybody really missed anything.

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome several new members to the Executive Committee. Their names, together with all the election results appear under "Past Functions".

But first, as always - a round-up of what's to come.

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FUTURE FUNCTIONS
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MONDAY DECEMBER 7TH - FILM EVENING.

Our last function of the year promises to be one to remember. For the first time, we'll be screening Bing's second feature movie: "COLLEGE HUMOUR" from 1933. From memory, the last time that that film was shown on television here was back in 1963.

Bing is supported in this film by Mary Carlisle, Jack Oakie and Burns and Allen. "Learn to Croon" and "Down the Old Ox Road" came from College Humour and there is one marvellous sequence in which Bing (playing a professor of Music) illustrates a lecture on "Great Love Theme's from the Dramas" with extracts from such well known Crosby

songs as "I surrender dear", "Just one more chance" and "Just an echo in the valley which all ultimately lead into "Learn to Croon". It's quite something!

Support feature on the evening is "Paramount on Parade" from 1930 - one of those all star reviews popular at the time and featuring practically everyone from the Paramount lot. Stars include Richard Arlen, Jean Arthur, Clara Bow, Gary Cooper, Leon Errol, Helen Kane, Fay Wray, William Powell AND Maurice Chevalier.

This being a double feature evening, we must start sharp at 7.30 to not only fit in both pictures but also to have a reasonable time for supper.

Special Raffle This being our last meeting for the year, our door raffle will include a special extra prize of a Bing Crosby Mirror. Measuring 28" x 21" the mirror features the image of Bing and would certainly make an interesting conversation piece in anyone's home! In addition, there will be several Crosby LP's as consolation prizes.

Due to the fragile nature of first prize, we think it safest to limit ticket sales to those on the night, but if any interstate members are prepared to pay the cost of packing and shipping, then they may also buy tickets, providing the money reaches us by Friday December 4th. Tickets will be $1.00 each to cover the high cost of the prizes.

Venue, as always, is the theatrette of the Mobil Building in South Melbourne (round the back of the Art Centre Theatre). But as we must start at 7.30 p.m., please plan to get there by 7.15 as there is always a queue of people paying entry fees, buying raffle tickets, etc.

ENTRY:

Members: $2.00
Member families: $5.00
Pensioners and Junior Members: $1.00

Non-members: $4.00
Non-member families: $8.00

REMEMBER! 7.30 P.M. START. SHARP!

MONDAY FEBRUARY 15TH, 1982

Our first function for the new year. Probably will be a combination film and music evening but this is not yet definite. However, the date is, so please note it in your diary now.

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PAST FUNCTIONS

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MONDAY AUGUST 17TH - FILM AND MUSIC EVENING

The proven combination of Bill Bennett and old movie clips drew a turnout of some fifty enthusiastic members. Bill provided us with another fineselection of Crosby musical numbers whilst up on the silver screen we were entertained by Helen Morgan, Eddie Cantor, Judy Garland, a very very very young Ginger Rogers (17 or 18 at the most) and of course, Bing in excepts from "Road to Singapore" and "Going My way". (Thanks Les.)

Winners of the door raffle on the night were Noel Lambden (Old Masters) and Max Nicholson (Bing's Musical Autoblog.)

MONDAY NOVEMBER 2ND - AGM AND MOVIE EVENING

Certainly this would have been one of the most successful evenings of the year. Thanks to free publicity by Neville Wragg and "Sentimental Journey" on the ABC, more than 80 people turned up on the evening.

As mentioned earlier, yours truly forgot his speech and had to make one up on the spot but it was unlikely that anyone could tell the difference!

After the reports and elections, the meeting got down to the "serious" business of the evening - the drawing of the door raffle and the screening of the 1936 Crosby movie "Anything Goes".

The latter was most enthusiastically received by all present and when we eventually get round to re-screening Bing's movies, it will be high on the list. (Cont/p7)

JOCKS

In 1964, papa Bing [illegible] as Nathaniel [illegible] out the candles at his third [illegible]. Lately, [illegible] right, he displays the fierce concentration a winning golfer requires. "All I ever wanted was to make my dad proud," he says.

BING CROSBY'S SON NATHANIEL WINS THE U.S. AMATEUR GOLF TITLE AND HITS THE ROAD TO STARDOM

Wherever Nathaniel Crosby goes, he is confronted with the inescapable question: What was it like growing up as Bing Crosby's son? "There were obvious advantages," says Nathaniel, 19, the youngest of the late crooner's seven children, "but there were disadvantages too. We didn't have the freedom a lot of kids had. We had to be a little careful. People always had their eyes on us."

Never more so than last week. Nathaniel, in a heart-stopping finish, stormed from behind to capture the 81st U.S. Amateur golf championship, joining a pantheon of winners with names like Nicklaus and Palmer. For Nathaniel Crosby the victory fulfilled a promise he made to himself in 1977, the year his father died of a heart attack after a round of golf in Spain. Young Crosby vowed at the time that he would win a major tournament before he was 20. He beat the deadline by a month, and in spectacular style, winning six of the last 10 holes to tie his final match, then sinking a dramatic 15-foot birdie putt on the first extra hole.

Throughout the six-day tournament in San Francisco, just nine miles from the Crosby home in Hillsborough, Nathaniel's gallery included his mother Kathryn, 48. She wore one of her late husband's jackets, altered to fit, for [illegible] on the final day. Though Nathaniel has played in dozens of amateur tournaments, he felt extra pressure to win the big one because of the accomplishments of his illustrious family.

[illegible]

After Nathaniel won the U.S. Amateur (above), he and mother Kathryn went to Mass to give thanks. Then it was on to their country club, where mom broke out the good champagne. "I have it in case one of the boys gets married," she said.

"Look at my father and mother," he joked after the last putt had fallen. "And my sister [actress Mary Frances Crosby of *Dallas*] shoots J.R. on TV. Hey, I've *got* to win the U.S. Amateur."

Nathaniel's initiation into the mysteries of golf began when he was 4 and knee-high to a niblick. Touring pro Jack Burke Jr., his godfather and a former PGA Champion, made him a set of shortened clubs, and by the time little Nat was 7 he was playing regularly with Bing. "I had a very close relationship with him," Nathaniel recalls. "Maybe more so than the other kids because we had the same interests. Whenever we were both free, we played. He loved it and so did I."

Voted most valuable player on his Burlingame High School team, Nathaniel turned down recruiters from Stanford and Rice to enroll at the University of Miami, where he is now a junior. A political science major with no thought of going into show business, "I have absolutely no talent," he lives alone in an apartment eight minutes from school, and spends most of his free time with girlfriend Jill Taylor. Though he describes himself jokingly as a "typical punk teenager," he comfortably maintains a B average. "It's a priority to get my college degree," he says, "but I'm going to have to talk to my coach before I decide about continuing to play on the college circuit this year."

By winning the U.S. Amateur championship, Crosby automatically qualifies for next year's U.S. Open, the British Open, the Masters and the World Series of Golf. For now, he has no intent on all turning pro, but will stay on as chairman of the popular Bing Crosby National Pro-Am Tournament, a job he inherited from his father when he was only 18. "I sign the contracts and make the final decisions," says Nathaniel, who once vetoed a plan to drop amateurs from the televised final round of the tournament. "I knew the way my father felt about amateurs," he explains. "Without them, the spirit of the tournament would have been lost."

Bing, in fact, is never far from his youngest son's mind. During last week's tournament, whenever the tension was thickest, Nathaniel would nervously finger an old medallion that Bing had won in 1941 for qualifying to compete in the amateur championship. "Thinking of my father always relaxes me," Nathaniel says. "I knew he was up there and that he was with me."

MARIA WILHELM

After interval, the raffle was drawn by young Kelly and Shane Carson who did a great job of selecting the four winning tickets from the bag.

Winners were:
Mary Nanscawen (Old Masters)
Joe Stevens (45 single "Do you hear what I hear")
Ian Barnes (Bing Crosby Sings)
John Lane (Tacoma Souvenir disc)

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AGM REPORT
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New Executive Committee for 1982

I'm happy to announce that the following people will be running the Society for you in the coming year:

President: Bob Machliss
Vice-President: Ken Orren
Treasurer: Keith Dorman
Secretary: Les Saynor
General Committee: Jim McManus
Bill Bennett
Josie Conway
Sylvia Harding
George Styles

We extend a hearty welcome to Josie, Sylvia and George and look forward to sharing many good times together. Committee meetings are usually mini-club functions in themselves!

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President's Report (edited)

The year just past has been a good one for the Society. The club continues to expand and develop. In fact, counting everyone who has joined since day one back in 1977, we are not too far off signing up our 300th member. There are some who have dropped by the wayside over the years, but all in all, things have never looked better.

These days, our membership is truly an international one with members in such countries as England, USA, Holland, Brazil, New Zealand, Canada and Japan. Japan deserves special mention. No other country has done so much in recent years for the commercial re-issuing of early 78 material.

1981 saw two major additions to the Club services. One an enormous success and the other, to be honest, a complete failure! The first was the addition of the tapes from the Keith G. Hyde Bequest to the club library. These tapes containing literally hundreds of songs from Bing's radio broadcasts of the late 1930's and early 1940's are amongst the most popular in our library and deservedly so. The club will always be appreciative to Keith's widow Edna for her generous donation; one that is most certainly helping to keep Keith's name alive. This is also a suitable time to again thank Edna for her superb gift of a framed Crosby record master; an item which when auctioned earlier this year, added a great deal of money to club funds.
As for the failure, this was a complete surprise to all of us. A few months ago, we introduced a book library service featuring copies of all the currently available Crosby books and one rare book generously dontated by member Greg Young, "Call Me Lucky".

But for some reason, the book library has just not taken off. Withdrawals are minimal and interest, even at meetings, is low. Nonetheless, we will be continuing the service in 1982 and adding one new book when it becomes available; the notorious "Bing Crosby - the Hollow Man".

In 1981, we saw that our policy of screening movies was the right one. Attendances at all our movie nights were excellent and we screened a number of rare Crosby movies and other films of interest from the period.

Mid-year, we also experimented with a video evening at which we played two Crosby television specials from the late 1970's Despite technical problems on the night, the idea seemed to receive good support, and provided that we can find suitable material to screen, we will repeat the experiment in the future.

Cont..../11.

HARRY ELLIS
BING

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LETTER From Renee Chester of England, on her U.S. visit.

****** The four weeks I spent in America were the happiest holiday of my life. I first visited Tacoma for the Historical Society Tribute and then journeyed to Tacoma for the unveiling of Bing's statue. Phil Harris and Jimmy Van Heuson (see photo below - man in the middle is English entertainer Roy Chappell) were there. President Reagan sent a telegram and Bob Hope phoned. At 3 pm on that same day, I had the honour to present Kathryn Crosby with a set of bronze medallions of Bing on behalf of the International Crosby Circle. She was delighted with the gift and asked me to visit her home the following week. I was thrilled to accept and made the visit with two friends from England and Priscill Koernig. We stayed with Kathryn for over two hours and she showed us around her beautiful house. She is a real lady and truly loved Bing.

From there, we travelled through several American cities to finally arrive at Bing's grave where we placed a beautiful floral arrangement in blue and gold flowers (see photo bottom left) and had a good cry.

In all, my trip to America was the thrill of a lifetime and I am so proud to belong to all the Crosby societies around the world. I do hope you print this letter to let the American fans know how much I appreciated their kindness to me - especially Cal Calloway.

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Renee, it's a pleasure to feature your letter and to reproduce the fine photographs you included. I'm sure that many readers wish that they had been along with you on your trip. B.M.

One setback the club received in 1981 was the unexpected and serious illness of our Treasurer Thelma Wood. Had Thelma been only our Treasurer, that would have been bad enough. But Thelma was also a one-woman social committee and almost single-handedly, organized our social functions for the year. When Thel took ill in January, there was no-one to take over her position on the social side and although Keith Dorman stepped in and did a wonderful job of picking up the reins of Treasurer, the other position remained vacant.

As a result, the projected Dinner Dance and Barbecue for later in the year both had to be cancelled. It is to be hoped that some volunteers can be found to handle future social functions, otherwise we will have to give such things a miss in 1982.

Thelma, by the way, is slowly recovering, and I would like to take this opportunity to again thank her for the fantastic effort she put in to making the club what it is today.

And whilst I am thanking people, my thanks must also go to Keith Dorman, Ken Orren, Les Saynor, Jim McManus and Bill Bennett for their work on the committee.

Thanks also to Neville Wragg and Clarke Sinclair, Mobil Oil for their donation of their fine facilities without charge, and of course, Wally, Mobil's hard-working projectionist.

In 1981, we continued to upgrade the standard of the club newsletter "The Crosby Voice". In particular, we have increased the number of photo pages to include material we hope will be of interest to the majority of members. Although every issue now costs well in excess of $100 to produce and mail out, we feel that the expense is justified, particularly for interstate and overseas members to whom the newsletter is the Society.

In closing, may I say that I feel that the club has continued to put into practice its stated objectives: To keep Bing's name alive and to create more general appreciation of the contribution of Bing Crosby to popular music. Thank you. Bob Machliss

Treasurer's Report

Balance Sheet 1/9/80 to 31/8/81

Receipts:

(Combining Membership fees, cassette library fees, Tacoma Souvenir Disc sales, raffles, film night entries)

Cheltenham A/c 901037	$641.50
Cheltenham A/c 900720	$180.94
Bentleigh A/c 901716	$1098.89
TOTAL	$1921.33

Payments:

Records, books, magzines (raffle prizes)	$293.17
Film Hire	$125.00
Australia Post	$323.44
Contemporary Sound Centre (for hi-fi system)	$169.00
Sinatra Society (printing newsletter)	$344.40
Dindy Marketing (cassette tapes for library)	$ 81.60
Richard Pearson (Crosby lock)	$ 18.00
Hire of video equipment	$100.00
Envelopes and printing	$143.75
TOTAL	$1598.36

BALANCE ON HAND 31/8/81	$1921.33
	$1598.36
	$322.97

U.S.A. ACCOUNT
1st National Bank of Virginia A/c 0621-5300 US$140.00

NOTES:

In between Thelma taking ill and Keith taking over the role of treasurer, there were several weeks in which detailed accounts were not kept. All money received has been accounted for, but exactly what money came from what source is impossible to acertain

Our US account is maintained by our US rep Richard Pearson and holds sub money collected from US members It is used for club purchases from the USA. B M.

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NEW RECORD ISSUES

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Although the local record scene continues to be depressed things are really humming overseas. Two issues, one in the UK and one in Japan feature collections of Bing from the Whiteman era, whilst there is an interesting Time/Life record set featuring Bix Beiderbecke,containing several Crosby vocals.

But the most exciting news is the Japanese issue, because in addition to the afore mentioned it also contains the four vocals recorded on January 28th, 1960 for RCA, two of which have only been issued in Australia in the mid-1960's on a long-defunct EP: The Music of Home, It's a Good Day, The New Ashmoleon Marching Society and Aloha Means I love you!

The title of the two LP set is "YOUNG BING CROSBY" (RCA RJL 2011/2) and the other tracks are:

Wistful and blue, Pretty lips, Muddy water, I'm coming Virginia, Side by side, Mississippi Mud/I left my sugar standing in the rain, Sweet Lil/Ain't she sweet, That's grandma, Miss Annabelle Lee, Changes, From Monday On(1) There ain't no sweet man, Sunshine, From Monday On (2), High Water, My Pet, Louisana, You took advantage of me, Three little words, Them there eyes, Ho hum.

Our Japanese member, Kyoichi Muneta, may be able to help you obtain this disc, but please write first. The address: 1-19-21 Nakakosaka, Higashi-Osaka 577, Japan.

Other new issues:

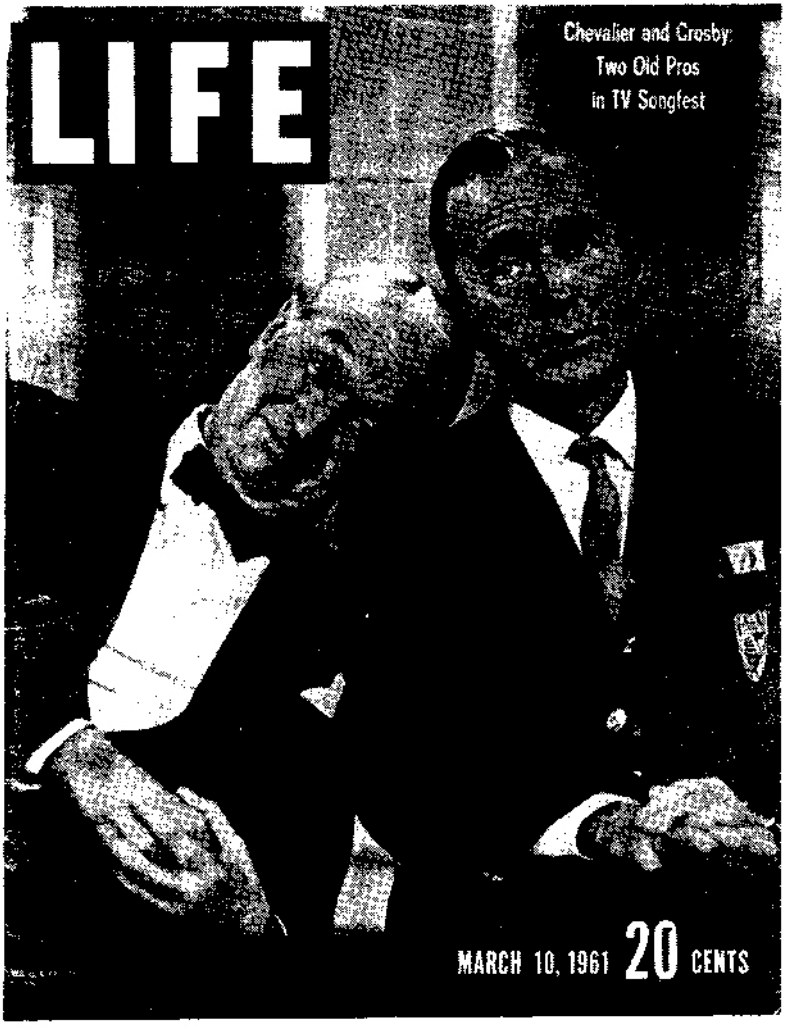
BIX 'N' BING - Living Era AJA 5005, Cassette ZC AJA 5005
From the UK comes an interesting collection of Bing and Bix with the Whiteman Orchestra. The LP features 20 tracks some of which duplicate the Japanese issue above, but about half of which are different. Cost of the record is three pounds 75p plus one pound 50p postage, if you order from Beauchamp Record Club, 111 Fulham Rd, London SW3. UK members can phone 01 584 8203 for details.

They have other nostalgia records of interest too.

Cont.../22

THEN and NOW
Bing Crosby
Printed in U.S.A.

HOME OF BING CROSBY, POLICE LINE, NORTH HOLLYWOOD, CALIF.


LIFE
Chevalier and Crosby:
Two Old Pros
in TV Songfest
MARCH 10, 1961 20 CENTS

TELEVISION

Romp for two ageless troubadours

Friday 21 August 1981

BING CROSBY SOCIETY: A social club for thirties music discophiles and fans of the late great crooner. The society's social calendar, briskly organised by president Thelma Wood, includes several elaborate barbecues (complete with monogrammed "B.C." serviettes and glasses), an annual dinner dance at Bing's Restaurant in Hawthorn, and regular film and supper nights at the Mobil Theatrette.

Membership is $6 and covers the cost of a quarterly newsletter, an attractive membership card, Bing badges (choose from four designs), and a 40-page magazine packed with thoroughly researched articles, interviews and information on rare recordings. Members may also borrow cassettes from the society's library which has more than 3000 of Bing's songs on tape.

Write: C/-PO Box 423, South Melbourne, 3205.

Above: This great mention in the Age 'Weekender' in August resulted in several new members for the Society.

Below: As you can see, good news comes in all forms.

Wartime record

CANBERRA — World War 2 radio shows which were nearly "lost at sea" have been given to the National Library.

The 42 hour-long recordings, featuring Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, Red Skelton and others, have never been released commercially.

They were produced by the U.S. armed forces radio service to boost troops' morale.

Mr Mel Nichols, former officer-in-charge of the RAAF cine unit, said they were about to be dumped in the sea off Borneo when a U.S. officer gave them to him as gift.

Mr Nichols has given them to the National Library.

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COLLECTOR'S
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"I'VE GOT THE GIRL"

A very historic record - Bing's very first ever, from October 18th, 1926 (just over 55 years ago!) Although not even a good record by 1926 standards, it was actually issued in three countries at the time! This is the Australian issue, other issues being in the USA and UK. Many collectors believe that this recording plays too quickly and that the sound is more correct at around 74 - 75 rpm.

"WISTFUL AND BLUE"

Recorded about two months after "I've got the girl", this is Bing's second record and his first for Paul Whiteman. Quite a milestone in its day, it featured Crosby and Rinker in one section in a wordless 'scat' chorus. Johnny Mercer is quoted as saying that he was greatly impressed by this vocal when he first heard it as a young man. Recording date is December 22nd, 1926.

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CORNER
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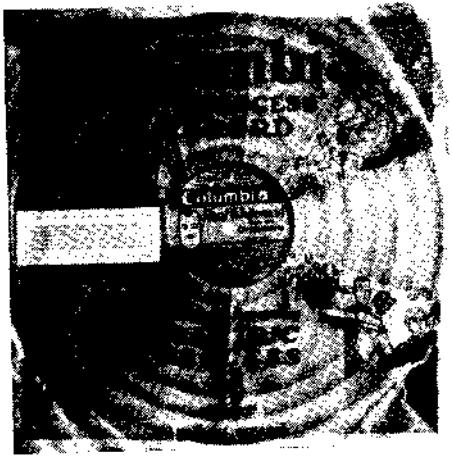
"I KISS YOUR HAND MADAME"

Another historic record, this being one of the very first of Bing's as a solo artist. Recorded on May 24th, 1929, this is the original American issue. Interesting, Bing re-recorded this song on Jandary 7th, 1947 when he featured it in his movie of that year, "Emperor Waltz".

COLUMBIA PAPER RECORD SLEEVE.

On page 29 you can see a reproduction of the special Paul Whiteman label that Columbia records designed for the famous bandleader. These records, along with other Columbia "new process" records were sold in these colourful paper labels. Is that the Rhythm Boys in the top left? By the way, the record in the cover is "La Paloma" one of Bing's 'humming' chorus waxings for Whiteman. (May 21, 1928)



OLD CROONERS NEVER DIE. THEY JUST SING AWAY...

New Record Issues Cont.

GIANTS OF JAZZ - BIX BEIDERBECKE - Time/Life Records

Now available in Australia, this set contains three LP's contains 40 Bix tracks from May 1924 to September 1930 and happily mixes the best of Gennetts, OKeh's, Victor's, Perfect's and Columbia's. Bing features on 6 common tracks but it's really Bix who stars. The set is excellently presented with a 16cm square colour portrait of Bix suitable for framing.

SWING WITH BING and YOU KEEP COMING BACK LIKE A SONG

Two LP's on the US Koala label. Both feature radio tracks from the late 40's and early 50's but apart from that, have little to recommend them. Quality is only fair and running time short. One LP comes in under 25 minutes; the other even less. Catalogue numbers are AW 14129 and KO 14207 respectively.

PORTRAITS OF THE PAST - Bravura 101
This US LP features a 1944 Frank SInatra Radio show on which Bing is guest. No other details to hand.

There are also many LP's being issued with one or two Crosby tracks amongst others. As we are concerned with major issues, these discs are not listed here. However, two anthologies recently issued overseas are worthy of mention.

THERE'S NO BUSINESS LIKE SHOW BUSINESS - The Magical Songs of Irving Berlin.

This four LP set features 52 original recordings of Irving Berlin songs, which although not dated, range from World War 1 to the early 1950's. Too many to list here but you'll know all the artists and the songs. Bing is represented on "Coquette" (with Whiteman), "Face the Music Medley", "How deep is the ocean".

HOAGY CARMICHAEL - From Stardust to Ole Buttermilk Sky.
Similiar to the above but 3 LP's. Bing is on five tracks: Stardust, Moonburn, Small Fry, Lamplighter's Serenade and Cool of the Evening. For details of both sets, write to Ed Pacocha who told me about them. Ed's address: is 500 Sth Vine St, Shamokin, Pa 19892, USA.

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NEW MEMBERS

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It's been some time since we listed our new members, so what better time than now:

Ineke Hommes Johan van Oldenbarneveltlaan, The Hague, 2582 NK, Holland.
Valerie Snooks 77 View Rd, Burnie, Tasmania 7320
Timothy Morgereth, 1906 Codd Ave, Baltimore, Maryland 21222, USA.
Norman Wolfe, 145 15th St, N.E. Apt 403, Atlanta, Georgia 30361, USA.
Bernard O'Shea, 37 Tudor St, Richmond, Vic. 3121
Jim Loughlan 8/26 Davison St, Richmond, Vic 3121
Betty Bounds, 11 Elizabeth St, Mentone, Vic 3194
Graham Pascoe, 309 George St, Bathurst, NSW 2795
Robert Pasch, 114 Lancaster Lane, Lansing, Michigan, USA
Fernando Caldas, SQS 111-E Apt 102, Brasilia, DF - BRAZIL.
Gregg Hammond, 31 Lowell Drive, Farmingdale, New York 11735, USA.
Rowan Cameron, 6 Lonsdale Ave, Pymble, NSW 2073.
David Ward, 51 St Andrews St, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, England LN5 7UD
Vern Vasey, 6320 S.W. Cherryhill Drive, Beaverton, Oregon 97005, USA.
Max Nicholson, 1/26 Ballater St, Essendon, Vic 3040.
Mandy Sharples, 79 Strathbane Ave, Box Hill, Vic 3129.
Bruce Carter, 9/192 Clarke St, Northcote, Vic 3070.
John & Joy Hosking, 48 Queens Pde, Burwood, Vic 3125.
Mary Nanscawen, 343 Auburn Rd, E. Hawthorn, Vic 3123.
Joan Jewell, 24 Grovedale Rd, Surrey Hills, 3127.
Tony Cavanough, 49 Spicer St, Beaumaris, Vic 3193.
Joe & Joyce Crohan, 6 Valley Rd, Mt Waverley, Vic. 3149
Ronald Purssey, PO Box 184, Indooroopilly, Qld. 4068
Alexander Stanley, 24 Rosanna St, Carnegie, Vic 3163.
Wally and Maureen Carson, 5 Parker St, E. Brighton 3187.
David Rapp, 931 Decker Lane, Warminster, Penna 18974 USA
Mark Tocher, 785 Hanlon Rd, Guelph, Ontario, Canada NIG256
Josephine & Peter Giles, Box 2527W, GPO, Melbourne Vic 3001
Len & Eithne Grant, 37 Avenue Rd. Camberwell, Vic 3124.

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BING CROSBY, THE HOLLOW MAN - BOOK REVIEW

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Certainly no book on Bing has ever stirred up as much comment from Crosby admirers as this one, published earlier this year and apparently already into its third reprint.

Having now read the book, I feel in a much better position to comment upon it. The interesting thing is that the book is not, as would appear from the criticisms, to be a total attack on everything that Bing apparently stood for in his lifetime. In fact, the authors Donald Shepherd and Robert F. Slatzer have compiled a history of Bing that reveals new facts about his early days in show business and contains hitherto unknown information about his life and times.

The problem that I have with the book is not so much in what it says but how it says it. There is a style of journalism, one that was very noticeable in the book "Chariot of the Gods" published in the early 70's, which leads the reader through a maze of half-facts and opinion to emerge at the other end virtually daring them to deny that what they have asserted was true.

This book is written in this style.

When it does attack Bing, it does so with both barrels! To quote one example, the book has just examined the "official" story of Bing's rise to fame and comments as follows: "To be blunt, Bing's version of his rise to fame which he told in his own book and retold to the authors of three authorized biographies of him, is a pack of lies. What happened is that Bing double-crossed his way to the top, riding roughshod over people to do so. Then having reached his goal, he covered his trail like a thief in the night by conjuring up a story of luck and miraculous metamorphosis: Everett's over-night emergence from truck salesman to brilliant show-biz manager."

That passage, I believe, shows up another weakness of the book: the use of highly coloured emotional language to stir the emotions of the reader and soften him or her up to accept what follows as the truth. Cont .../27

THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

THE greatest double act yet to hit show business and amateur golf began in a New York speakeasy called O'Reilly's just as prohibition was ending.

Bing Crosby was an up-and-coming young star with his first hit record, "I Surrender Dear", when he and Bob Hope played New York's Capitol Theatre in 1932.

Bob was the MC and gave Bing a warm welcome — off and on the stage.

Over drinks in O'Reilly's bar they plotted a couple of routines to supplant Bob's usual semi-straight introduction. A classic partnership was born.

Their first act featured Hope strolling on stage alone. "Ah, good evening, ladies and gents. I'm afraid we'll have to do without my partner tonight — some cad locked him in the washroom . . ."

As the laughter died away, Bing would amble on from the other side of the stage holding a brass door-knob attached to a piece of splintered wood.

"Good evening ladies and gentlemen. I feel I must apologise, you'll have to forgive me for working alone tonight — my partner has an upset stomach."

"Now wait a minute!" Bob would retort. "I don't have an upset stomach."

"You will after you swallow this," Bing would reply, waving the door-knob under Bob's nose.

So began a friendly feud that lasted almost half a century and made both of them multi-millionaires.

Both became big radio stars and they began a double act of feuding which rapidly became a major talking point.

Bing called Bob "Scoop Nose" and "Dad". Hope fired back with "Blubber" and "Lard", a reference to Bing's supposed weight problems.

"There wasn't anything real," said Bing afterwards. "No basis for it. It's just that we'd needle one another and kid one another on our own programs. And I'd appear on his program and he on mine!"

Bob's first film appearance was not a success. When he saw the first clip he winced.

"I looked terrible. My nose came on about 20 minutes before the rest of my head."

But pretty soon that famous Hope ski-snoot became a paying trade mark, especially when he teamed up with Bing for the famous "Road" films.

"The Road to Mandalay", later retitled "Singapore," had inauspicious beginings. It started as a mediocre tropical island story which was then cleverly burlesqued by two Paramount screenwriters.

But nobody seemed willing to star in it. Fred MacMurray refused, then someone, and nobody is sure who, came up with the bright idea of teaming Crosby with Hope, with Dorothy Lamour as the lithe dark-haired beauty.

During the following two decades Bob, Dorothy and Bing were to travel seven celluloid roads to Singapore, Zanzibar, Morocco, Utopia, Bali, Rio and Hongkong. They were to create a whole new style of cinema and smash long-standing box office records.

"It was fun from the very first day," said Dorothy Lamour.

For the first morning's shooting of "Mandalay", Bob and Bing kept putting in unscheduled jokes.

After a while, Dorothy could stand it no longer. "Wait a minute! I can't get my line in!" she screeched angrily, stamping her foot oblivious of the whirling cameras.

"Cut!" bawled an exasperated director, as the entire set broke up in helpless laughter.

"Road to Morocco" in 1942 was almost their last film. Says Bob: "In one scene we were running down an alley chased by Arabian horsemen full speed behind us. If we hadn't found a doorway we would have both been trampled to death!"

Anthony Quinn again led the baddies in "Morocco." It was his third film with Hope, but the real villain turned out to be a camel.

It ad-libbed a stream of spittle right in the comedian's eyes. As Bing gleefully shouted "Good girl! Good girl!" the crew broke up in laughter. The scene was included in the picture, spit and all.

The same animal got a further laugh, with the help of the special effect department, when it delivered the line.

"This is the screwiest picture I was ever in."

Another scene called for the curled toes on Bob's Arabian slipper to straighten after a long and passionate kiss from Dorothy. That prompted the obvious Crosby crack: "Now kiss him on the nose and see if you can straighten that out!"

The Royal Family has always had a soft spot for Bob Hope. He's the court jester

GETTING IN HARMONY WITH CROSBY

...s goes a bit too far ... but they love him just the same.

There were a few royal waters in 1955 when he joked about the recently broken romance of Princess Margaret and Peter Townsend.

Townsend should have known better than to try to play the Palace ... I never would."

But how can you be angry with a man who does so much for charity?

Of all the many honors Bob Hope has received including a special U.S. Congress resolution praising him, it's safe to say that none rates higher than the going the Queen gave him in America's bicentenary year, shortly before attending a White House banquet ... an honorary CBE.

For more than three decades speculation has been rife about the true worth of Bob Hope ... that he is a millionaire there's no doubt, but how many millions does he actually have?

The question has fascinated media and public alike, for years. In 1969 Fortune magazine computed his assets at between $150 million and $500 million, and named him as one of the 50 richest men in the United States - the only show business representative on the list.

Bob has always played down the press guesstimates. "I think their computer drinks," he said of the Fortune estimates. "If I sold my land today I'd be worth no more than $100,000,000 ... well maybe $100,000,001."

However shortly before his 75th birthday in 1978, he did discuss the speculation.

"I tell you, I would have done a lot of things if I'd had half a billion dollars," he said. "I never even came close to that, and never had anything near that kind of money ... and I actually have to work to pay my taxes."

A major part of his charitable work involves attending scores of religious benefits.

I do benefits for all religions. I'll have to think this hereafter on a technicality ...

"It's getting so my golf game needs all the help it can get, so I never say no to any religious groups.

"But I believe in both Christianity and Judaism — I have, ever since Danny Thomas and Sammy Davis did a dance number on my swimming pool together.

"And it doesn't matter whether one is Catholic or Jewish. We all believe in one God — George Burns ...

"No, I don't mind kidding about religion. If God let George Burns play Him in a movie ... he's gotta have a sense of humor."

Adapted from "Bob Hope — The Road From Eltham," by Charles Thompson.

Book review cont.

There is no doubt that Bing was not Father O'Malley in real life; but then, who is? The book reveals that in all probability, Bing was very much an ordinary human being with the same types of failings and faults that all of us possess in some degree.

In Bing's case, these weaknesses were lost in the studio image of "friendly old Bing", but then, as the book admits, this was 'good for business'.

Despite my criticism, I would recommend that members do read the book, if for no other reason than to be better informed on what it contains so as to be able to comment objectively about it in future. BM

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MEMORIES OF BING

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From Fernando Caldas, Brazil.

From my very early youth I knew of American music through the 78's of my late father. I cannot recall precisely which of Bing's records captured my attention first, but it could have been "Just a gigolo", "Black Moonlight" or "Two cigarettes in the dark" which were in my father's small collection.

I can recall precisely the day and place I brought my first Bing Crosby record. It was a shiny blue label Odeon 78 with "San Fernando Valley" on one side and "Poinciana" on the other. I still have the same record in my collection to this day. Records were quite expensive then and I probably had to sacrifice a couple of movie tickets in order to buy it.

From that moment, I was bitten by the bug. This was back in one of Bing's best periods with the John Scott Trotter Orchestra and there were plenty of "Roads" to visit at the movies.

One of the biggest achievements was to learn English from my efforts to understand the words of his songs. I was

studying English at school and soon I climbed to first place ahead of my fellow students. I even had arguements with the teacher concerning the right pronunciation of certain words!

I remember that in the late 1940's, a group of friends of my father use to join regularly at our house to listen to records, and I was the "disc jockey". Bing's records were always the most played and the last number of every session was inevitably "Hasta Manana" (see you tomorrow). I took advantage of my position to claim higher allowances or "special fundings" for Bing Crosby records.

The first time I was ever able to buy a primitive tape recorder (around 1950) the tapes were made out of paper which broke all the time. Apart from this, they were expensive and hard to get. When plastic tape came in, I managed to buy an "enormous supply" of 12, and besides taping all my Crosby records, I taped everying of his belonging to friends, including a few 16" AFRS transcriptions I borrowed from the US Consulate.

I didn't have the tiniest idea how to get a discography and couldn't even imagine that there were such things as appreciation societies. Eventually I managed to get an old catalogue of records from Odeon and for the first time, was able to make preliminary research on Bing's records.

Financial limitations were the main obstacle to getting the records I wanted. I had to depend on friends going to the US to bring back records for me. The first time I went to the US in 1962, I started buying up the records that I had been pursuing for many years.

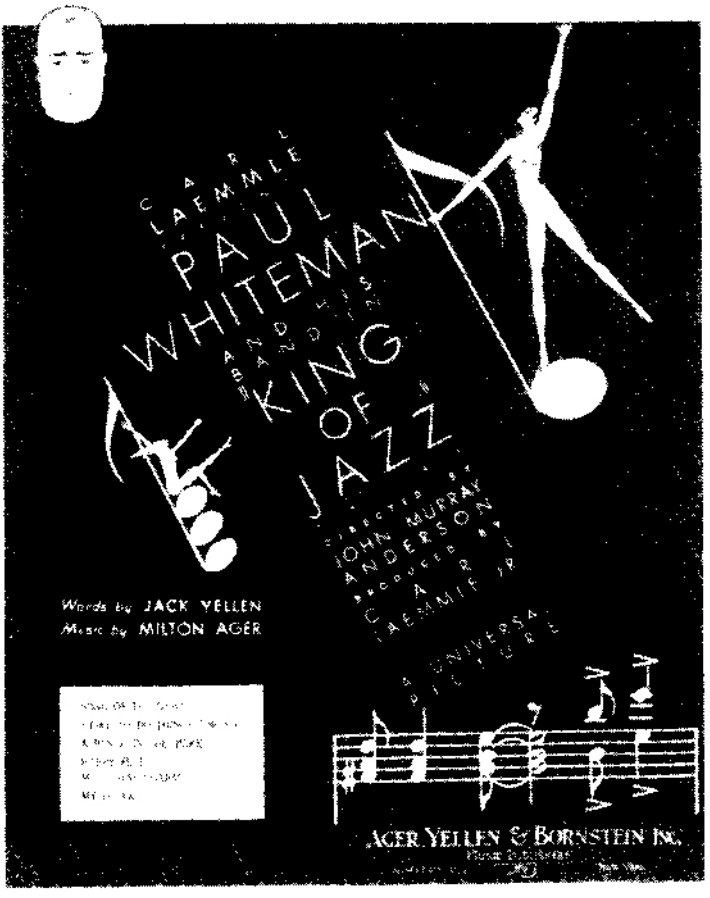
Then about five years ago I first heard that there actually were appreciation societies for Bing Crosby. Until then I had imagined that my appreciation for Bing Crosby music was something shared by very few people.

Today I have friends in many countries who help me get the material I want. With such excellent and complete discographies as "Bing - Just for the Record", it is easy to find what is missing in my collection.

(Write to Fernando. He'd like to hear from you. His address appears on page 23. BM)

In many collector's opinions, this is one of the most striking LP covers produced for a reissue of early recordings. It features, in full colour, a giant reproduction of one of the special 'potato head' Whiteman labels from the last 1920's. Of course, instead of the title, the words: "Featuring Bing Crosby" have been used. The LP contains 16 excellently reprocessed tracks and 15 of these feature Crosby vocals. Originally released back in 1968, it's doubtful that this record is still available. U.S. members, any comments?

SONG OF THE DAWN



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BITS N' PIECES

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. Ian Barnes, 1/27 Browns Rd, Montrose, Victora, Australia 3765. is looking for a 45 rpm copy of "Second Time Around". Can anyone help?

. Pioneer have been demonstrating that latest wonder of the age - the home video disc player, around town lately. The demonstration disc they play has all kinds of interesting items, but the one that stopped me dead in my tracks was a short extract from the 1931 movie "Reaching for the moon" - Bing singing "High Up Low Down"!

. Latest news from Al Rinker is that he is slowly recovering from his heart attack of some months ago. We wish him well.

. Several years ago, Canadian radio identity Gord Atkinson presented an eleven part series entitled the "Crosby Years". (3AW ran it in this country.) Word now comes at Gord Atkinson is preparing a book based on the series. Watch for it in a year or so.

. Someone who shall remain nameless (because they forgot to include their name) sent back their $2 membership renewal in a brown envelope with the address "PO Box 132, Warrandyte 3113". From the post mark, we know that the letter went through the Preston Mail Centre. Was this <u>your</u> membership?

. The Saturday night ABC programme "Sentimental Journey" will shortly (and may already have done so by the time this newsletter arrives) be presenting a 60 minute special on Bing using tapes from the club library. We recently sent them a selection of collectors' items to make into a programme. Let us know if you hear it.

. An excellent new book "The Hollywood Musical" is on sale around town. Although costing close to $30, it is worth the money. It lists <u>every</u> musical ever made in Hollywood, features plot synopsis of each with cast lists and also includes a great many stills. Bing, naturally enough, features throughout the book. From the way the book is written, it sounds like the author has seen every film!

. Sad to note the passing of Leo Lynn, Bing's old friend and double for Crosby in many of his movies.

. If you missed out getting Bing's single of "Do you hear What I hear/Christmas Dinner Country Style" back in 1965, you'll be pleased to hear that you can still pick up new copies on American import Capitol label. Cost is Au$3.50 but worth it. See either Batman Record Store, 370 Little Bourke Street or 215 Swanston Street, Melbourne.

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OTHER CROSBY SOCIETIES
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BING CROSBY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, P.O. Box 8013, Tacoma, Washington, USA 98408. President: Ken Twiss.

CLUB CROSBY: P.O. Box 8283, Sacramento, Ca. 95818, USA. President/Editor: Al Sutton.

INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE: 7 Greenmeadow Close, Cwmbran NP 44 4PJ, England. Editor: Reg Bristo.

KATHRYN CROSBY CLUB, 1374 Broadway, #7D, West Somerville, Ma. 02144, USA. President: Caroline Dawson.

THE SOUTHAMPTON BING CROSBY CLUB, 17 Edwina Close, Bitterne Southampton, England. Editor: Jim Newell.

INTERNATIONAL SINATRA SOCIETY, P.O. BOX 123, Clayton, Victoria, Australia 3168. President: Bill Weeden.

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RECORDS AT DISCOUNTS TO MEMBERS
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Two Melbourne record shops offer discounts to members.

The Bentleigh Sewing and Record Centre, 348 Centre Road, Bentleigh AND Cunninghams Record Centre, 80 Church St, Brighton. Just say you're a member when you go in.

Whilst on the subject of records: Thomas' Records 78 section has been expanded. Well worth a look.

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TAPES FOR SALE

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Once again, there are two suppliers. Jonathan Russell, 10 Roxburgh Road, Westgate-on-sea, Kent CT8, 8RX, England has tapes of Bing's Philco, Chesterfield and GE shows for sale.

Arnold Baker's "Tapes Exclusive" service, also from England, has a huge supply of interesting and unusual cassette tapes for sale. Write for a catalogue enclosing some International Reply Paid coupons. The address: 48 Groomsport Road, Bangor, Co Down, Northern Ireland BT20 5LR, United Kingdom.

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LETTERS

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From Mark Scrimger, 314 E. Main St, Parma, Michigan 49269

I'm interested in trading for, or purchasing Australian 78's, Australian sheet music, and a soft cover version of "The Complete Crosby" by Charles Thompson. I'm also interested in any Australian LP's that don't duplicate American issues.

From Ken Twiss of the Bing Crosby Historical Society

The author of "Bing Crosby - the Hollow Man" has written the Society an open letter clearing us of any connection with the book. I did give him the corrected information as to Bing's birthday, but this was done long before we knew the title or the contents of the book. Don Shepherd has promised to give us all the news clippings used in compiling the book. This will be a nice addition to our archives. The Society has also been receiving a lot of unsolicited gifts of albums, scrap books and just this week we got a game something like Monopoly. It was "Call Me Lucky", a game evidently put out by Crosby enterprises. It is in mint condition, and a unique addition to our archieves. END.

THE BING CROSBY HISTORICAL SOCIETY IS, WITHOUT DOUBT, THE MOST IMPORTANT CROSBY SOCIETY IN THE WORLD. JOIN NOW AND HELP KEEP BING'S MEMORY ALIVE! BM

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FROM OUT OF THE PAST

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Extracts from the record notes to the Bix Beiderbecke Time/Life Giants of Jazz 3 LP set.

MISSISSIPPI MUD - Frankie Traumbaur Orchestra 20th Jan.'28

Paul Whiteman's contract with Victor was due to expire at the end of April, 1928; in a seduction widely covered by newspapers, newsreel and radio. Columbia lured him away from the company he had recorded for since 1920. Victor hastily scheduled the orchestra into the studios 32times from January until only two hours before the contract ran out.

It was a break for Bix, and as things turned out, for posterity; a lot of good Bix was preserved on record. Tram, meanwhile, managed to slip two January small band dates for Okeh into the ever-tighteneing schedule,both using Whiteman musicians.

MISSISSIPPI MUD is from the second session. Bing Crosby's vocal backed by Matty Malneck's hot fiddle and punctuated by some dreadful minstrel show patter with Trambauer, is in the band key of Eb, which would have scaled the song's written melody too high for Bing's light baritone range. He solved the problem in a jazz singer's way by cleverly building the entire chorus around what otherwise might have been second and third harmony lines.

Compare, for example, his treatment of the words, "What a dance/Do they do/Lawdy, how I'm telling you" with the melody played more or less straight in the final ensemble by Bix. Crosby, by his own admission, was heavily influenced at this time by his association with Bix and Tram, and his vocal shows it. (The words, incidently, would have been considered more than slightly offensive by a later generation; at the time, such lyrics were not uncommon.)

Bix's chorus, coming immediately after the vocal, seems self-contained, detached from the rest of the goings on. After a four-bar preamble, he sings out a top-of-the-staff

E flat that announces the melody with engaging sweetness. He deals well with the short extension at midchorus, turning the entire four bars into a miniature essay on the tonic chord. Note, too, the elasticity with which he delivers the last eight bars of his solo: slight delays, noticeable quickening - a kind of rhythmic rubato that greatly enhances the passages emotional impact.

OKeh at the time was investigating different recording techniques and sound qualities. 'Mississippi Mud', recorded in a "dry" or well-padded studio, has none of the earlier records' resonance. In addition, Bix and the other trumpeter/cornetist on the date - presumably Charlie Margulis - are more closely miked than ever before. This imparts a slighly nasal quality to Bix's tone, almost as though he were working into a straight mute.

'Mississippi Mud' was one of two titles that were recorded on that day. The other, a small-band version of 'From Monday On', was never issued, and has eluded collectors for years. It remains - like the long-lost Goldkette performances of 'Stampede' and 'Play it Red' - one of the most tantalizing missing components of the Bix Beiderbecke story.

TAIN'T SO HONEY, TAIN'T SO - Paul Whiteman Orch. June 10,28.

The Whiteman orchestra seemed jinxed in its efforts to record this Challis arrangement of a song by Willard Robison. "Bing had to start cold on a concert A", Challis recalled. "No intro , nothing. He kept losing the note, making false starts. Finally, somebody turned up a dime-store pitch-pipe and gave him his note just before we started. That fixed him up."

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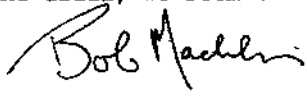
And that's where we'll have to end this edition of the Crosby Voice. Thanks to Tim Morgereth who brought these record notes to our attention. As usual, we seem to have run out of space before we've included all the material we had for this newsletter! Have a Happy Christmas and we'll be back in the new year.